

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheets of drawings include changes to Fig. 1, and newly added Figures 4 and 5. Figure 1 was amended to show reference numerals 12' and 15'.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet

Annotated Sheet Showing Changes

Sheet showing new Figures 4 and 5

Amendments to the Abstract:

Please substitute the new Abstract of the Specification submitted herewith on a separate page for the original Abstract presently in the application.

REMARKS

Applicants have amended claims 11 and 24. Claims 11-32 are now pending. Applicants have amended the drawings and the specification. No new matter was entered with the amendments.

Applicants appreciate the courtesy of a telephone interview granted by the Examiner on July 27, 2007. In the interview, applicants' representative discussed amendments to the drawings to better depict the embodiments of the ring groove. Clarifications to the claims language were discussed to overcome the indefiniteness rejection. Also discussed were the distinctions between the claimed subject matter recited in claims 11 and 24, and the Baumgartner et al. and the Baechler et al. references.

As requested, applicants are filing concurrently herewith an Information Disclosure Statement listing German patent document DE 94 22 342, which was initially listed in the Information Disclosure Statement filed on May 17, 2005.

The drawings were objected to for failing to show details of the grooves described in the specification and recited in the claims. As discussed in the interview, applicants have amended Figure 1 to change reference numerals to 15' for the lower-side ring groove, and to 12' for the lower-side adjusting screw. Figures 4 and 5 were added. Figure 4 shows an enlargement of the lower side region of the transverse beam 10 and the adjusting screw 12' of Fig. 1, with the adjusting screw 12' and the spring ring 14 removed from the threaded bore 16 to more clearly see the ring groove 15' formed therein. Figure 5 shows an enlargement of the upper side region of the transverse beam 10 of Fig. 1, with

the spring ring 14 removed to more clearly show the ring groove 15 formed on the adjusting screw 12. No new matter was added with the amendments, since all that is shown was described in the as-filed specification and was previously shown in original Fig. 1, and constitutes simply an enlarged and exploded view of the same elements already included in Fig. 1.

The specification was also amended to reflect the changes to Fig. 1 and the new Figures 4 and 5. No new matter was added.

A new abstract is provided with this Reply, to correct the informalities pointed out in the Office Action.

Applicants are filing concurrently herewith a Terminal Disclaimed to overcome the provisional rejection of claims 11-13 and 24-26, on the grounds of non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting, over claims of the copending Application No. 11/282,589.

Claims 11-32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. As discussed in the interview, applicants have amended those claims to make them definite.

In the Office Action, claims 11, 18, 19, 21-24 and 31-32 were rejected as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,568,845 to Baumgartner et al. Claim 20 was rejected as being obvious over Baumgartner et al., and claims 12-17 and 25-29 were rejected as being obvious over Baumgartner et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,642,995 to Baechler et al.

Baumgartner et al. describes a counter nut 800 threaded on the external threads of the adjusting spindle 71, and a disc spring 801 which is also threaded

on the adjusting spindle 71 to provide a longitudinal force against the counter nut 800. The disc spring 801 axially pre-stresses the counter nut 800 against the adjusting spindle 71, resulting in a definite friction force between the internal threads of the counter nut 800 and the external threads of the adjusting spindle 71. (See Fig. 2B and Col. 7, lines 35-56.) The disc spring in Baumgartner et al. thus applies an axial pre-stressing force only to the counter nut 800, which in turn limits rotation of the adjusting spindle 71 by exerting a friction thereon. The disc spring 801 does not interact with the threads of the transverse member 7, but only with the threads of the adjustable spindle 71.

In contrast, claim 11 recites a spring ring frictionally engaged in a ring groove formed in one of the threaded bore and the adjusting screw, the spring ring being also frictionally engaged with an opposite thread of the other one of the threaded bore and the adjusting screw. As discussed in the course of the telephone interview, Baumgartner et al. does not describe the claimed subject matter of the spring ring being frictionally engaged in a ring groove formed in one of the threaded elements, and being frictionally engaged with the thread of the other one of the threaded elements.

None of the remaining cited references describe or suggest the claimed elements. Indeed, the Office Action merely uses the secondary Baechler et al. reference to assert the disclosure of various metal springs with different shapes, cut from sheet metal. Claim 11 is therefore respectfully submitted not to be anticipated or rendered obvious, and to be allowable.

Claim 24 also recites features that are essentially analogous to those in claim 11, and at least for the same reasons is respectfully submitted to be allowable. The remaining pending claims depend from allowable independent claims, and at least for that reason are respectfully submitted to be allowable.

In view of the amendments and arguments presented, it is respectfully submitted that all the presently pending claims are allowable. All issues raised by the examiner having been addressed, an early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

If there are any questions regarding this Preliminary Amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket # 037068.56316US).

Respectfully submitted,

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Fig. 1

